

Conscious Discipline Weekly Information Sheet

Assertiveness-Saying "NO" and being heard: Setting limits respectfully. What you focus on, you get more of."

The goal of assertiveness is clarity. Assertive adults do the following with children:

- Tell children exactly what to do-State needs, wants, and expectations clearly and simply. "Sit down." "Put your seatbelt on."
- Send the proper nonverbal message "just do it" in the tone of your voice. If your body language/tone is too passive, the child may not comply. If you appear angry, the child may resist in self-defense. Child more likely to comply if you appear confident and in control.
- Be clear and direct.
- Own your feelings directly. "I feel angry when you interrupt me" is being assertive. "Look what you made me do" is an indirect passive/aggressive way to express anger.
- Speak in concrete terms. Avoid abstractions like good, bad, and nice. "Ask your friend if you can play by saying: May I please play?" is assertive. "Be nice to your friends," is not assertive.
- Be conscious of the intent behind the communication. The intent behind assertive communication is clarity. The goal is to help the child improve behavior rather than feeling bad about his/her actions.